1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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40 percent following the harvest of the second crop. This system of rent collection continued in Hsin Hsing village until the Land Reform Program. However, villagers say that some landlords in other places collected rents on a 70 percent–30 percent basis, and a few even insisted on the rent being paid in full immediately after the first crop.

The only thing which gave the tenant any security in his tenancy was a good personal relationship or good *kan-ch'ing* with the landlord. This, of course, was only possible if the two lived close enough together to have some sort of contact. Although there certainly were large economic, social, and usually educational differences, so that in extreme cases tenants scarcely dared to approach the house of the landlord except on business, a definite personal relationship often did develop. A landlord generally had a paternalistic feeling toward his tenant, and the tenant in turn felt an obligation to him.

In those earlier days, the tenant always helped the landlord who lived in the immediate area, and especially one who lived in Hsin Hsing, with certain jobs. He was available to assist the landlord to build a house or to help at funerals, weddings, and other ritual occasions. Sometimes the tenant would send a birthday present or a duck or a chicken to the "good landlord in thanks" and in order "to keep good *kan-ch'ing* between them." In case of a death in the landlord's family, the tenant would send a sacrifice to show his respect. But such behavior from tenant to landlord depended strictly on their actual relationship so that not all tenants sent gifts or provided help for their landlords. Some landlords were considered "tight"—a term the villagers often use to refer to a man who is "close-fisted" with money, or to a man who, if he is a landlord, does not concern himself with his tenant or other people if it is going to cost him anything. Such a landlord would not be too likely to receive "favors" from his tenants.

If there was a crop failure, the "good" landlord usually gave the tenant some sort of rent reduction. Although there were in those days no special regulations covering rent reductions in emergencies, the tenant and landlord would discuss the problem if a crop failed because of a typhoon or a water shortage. The tenant might be asked to pay 70 to 80 percent of the normal rent, according to the seriousness of the crop damage. Once one landlord gave a tenant such a rent reduction, it was not uncommon for other landlords to follow suit.

However, there were inflexible landlords who would not reduce the rent under any circumstances. In such cases any good *kan-ch'ing* that had ever existed between landlord and tenant would certainly deteriorate. Then, since tenants had no lease or written contract, the landlord might ask for a higher rent on the land for the next year, which might be a first step toward taking the land away from the tenant entirely and finding a new tenant.

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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427 571 entirely and finding a new tenant. Thus, while a tenant felt he would have some security on the land, if he could cement his relationship with his landlord or landlords, even such security was of questionable duration. And the tenants' problem was worsened by the small size of the fields, which meant that it was not uncommon for a man to have more than one landlord.

427 A good many landlords who rented land in the area to Hsin Hsing villagers did not live there. A number lived (as some still do) in relatively distant villages, and a few, usually businessmen, lived in Lukang or Taichung City. Since absentee landlords usually did not rely exclusively upon their land rents for a livelihood, they were often [731] not very strict with their tenants. In the event of a crop failure, the villagers recall that most of these absentee landlords were willing to allow a rent reduction, perhaps even more so than the landlord who lived in the village area. It was not, of course, easy for the absentee landlords to operate their land by themselves or to find a new tenant or hired laborer to take care of the land for them. The landlord who lived in the village area could operate the land himself with hired laborers or else easily find a new tenant.

427 571 The tenant whose landlord lived in the immediate area considered the maintenance of good *kan-ch'ing* an important factor in determining his tenure. He apparently realized, nevertheless, what a slender reed it was, since he admitted that absentee landlords were easier to deal with. Keen competition for land, especially in the postwar period, resulted in a constant danger that other would-be tenants might approach the landlord and offer him a higher rent or other concessions. Under such circumstances the tenant could only try to fulfill all of his obligations to the landlord with the hope of maintaining a precarious goodwill.

427 571 626 [464] [178] I heard of several landlords in Hsin Hsing village and the immediate area who switched tenants every year, with hardly a word of explanation, as they received better rental offers. Although such landlords were extremely unpopular in the countryside, there was little that tenants could do. These landlords were well known in the area for such practices, and when labor was in short supply during the extremely busy part of the agricultural season, many local farm laborers refused to work for them. This technique of getting back at unpleasant landlords is still used today. One landlord family in Hsin Hsing was greatly disliked by the villagers in the postwar period and to this day often has difficulty in obtaining labor at harvesttime.

The case of this family is an excellent example of the landlord-tenant problem in Hsin Hsing. Good feeling and mutual aid had existed between the old landlord, who was head of his family, and many of his tenants. After the death of the old man—which was prior

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796 788 776 628 [178] in the year when the twelve former allies come together and reaffirm their traditional unity, even though some of them may have been at odds with one another.

Each year a different village of the twelve declares its willingness to be host and takes the lead in organizing and arranging the procession. Leaders of the twelve meet there and decide which villages will furnish the entertainment which is provided along the route to and from the large Matsu temple in Lukang. The individual villages then organize, assigning by lot the various duties among their families. Some villagers are called upon to carry the large sedan chairs which bear the statues of the village gods, and others prepare and transport refreshments to the prearranged places where the procession stops for rest and food. When the lots are drawn to determine which family will assume which task, the names of the village's large landholders are always included [554] in the drawing. While they often willingly donate refreshments, they are loath to carry a sedan chair; now, as in the past, if selected to carry one, they usually pay another villager to replace them.

On the day of the procession, the villagers assigned to carry the sedan chairs assemble at a prearranged spot to begin the circuit [778] through the twelve villages. A large statue of Matsu, borrowed for the occasion from her temple in Lukang, is carried in a big sedan chair by several villagers. As the procession passes through the village, the residents worship the goddess, and a local shaman invites her to eat. Village teams of performers accompany the procession. They dance, give exhibitions of traditional boxing and sword play, act out little incidents or excerpts from traditional Taiwanese operas or stories, or do a dragon dance in which a large, green paper dragon is carried over the heads of many men who weave in and out to simulate his sinuous movements. The whole occasion is extremely gay and entertaining [782] and, it is felt, most rewarding. Many food offerings to the goddess are displayed in each village along the route. They are provided by each village family and are eaten at dinner in the evening, after the Matsu procession has passed. However, only the host village, where the Matsu statue remains overnight, or members of the wealthier or large villages invite guests from outside to share in the feast.

796 788 776 821 731 In the spring of 1958 the area was in dire need of water, since it had not rained for several months. Several hours after that year's Matsu procession began, the sky became overcast and by mid-afternoon a drenching rain was falling on the procession as it moved through the area. By the time the circuit was completed the rain had stopped, having flooded the rice paddies and saved the crop. It did not rain again for over a month. The villagers who do not believe in the power of Matsu were surprised. A few of the young men, some of whom are well educated, have told me that despite their skepticism they did feel that "Perhaps the rain on that day was more than just a coincidence."

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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The girl was eventually brought back to the village to live, and it was during the period of one attack that I was able to observe the techniques used to deal with the disturbance. Over a period of weeks a series of *t'iao t'ung* were called in an attempt to determine the cause of the problem. After each visit by a *t'iao t'ung*, a *fa shih* was employed and every time some more powerful master *fa shih* was called upon. Finally, the family of the girl asked the entire village to take part in a *pai-pai* in order to ask the gods to help. Four or five weeks after the onset of the attack the girl's symptoms seemed to disappear, and she resumed her normal village life. The only explanation the villagers could offer for the recovery was that perhaps the powers of the shaman, combined with the help elicited from the gods, rid the girl of the demons which possessed her.

Other Forms of Magical Activities

In addition to the healing rituals, there are other magical activities frequently carried on in the Hsin Hsing village area. When a village house catches fire, prodigious energy is expended on rituals to rid the village of the menacing "fire spirit" or "demon" usually believed to have caused the conflagration. On one such occasion, a *t'iao t'ung* was called in to help the villagers find out how to safeguard the rest of the village from fire, and a *fa shih* was called upon to exorcise the malevolent demon. The fire spirit ritual was held late at night, and practically the whole village turned out to watch the proceedings. The *t'iao t'ung*, assisted by about seven other men, held a large wooden chair which was normally used to seat the statues of the gods during processions, such as that held for Matsu. At the *t'iao t'ung's* initiative, the men began to shake the chair as an invitation for the god to come and sit in it. Gradually, the *t'iao t'ung* went into a trance, and while the god was trying to take his seat in the chair, the men shook it more and more violently, so that it appeared to take the strength of all of them to hold on to it. Once the god was seated in the chair the shaking diminished. At this point the *t'iao t'ung*, possessed by the god, began to chant. A *fa shih* was present to record the god's words, which told the people how they could get rid of the fire spirit and protect the other village houses. The god directed the people to appease the demon by burning paper money in different parts of the village and also advised them to place protective charms on each house. These charms were made by the *fa shih* who had been called upon to exorcise the demon.

By the light of several lanterns and torches, the villagers, the *t'iao t'ung*, and the *fa shih* began to proceed through the village as directed. At intervals during this march, a man carrying the chair suddenly would become possessed by the god. Eventually, all these men became

1:Gallin E-4,5 (1957-1958) 1966
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possessed and uncontrollably violent. They writhed and reeled and pulled the chair in different directions. At times the sheer weight of the moving chair caused them to fall to the ground in a heap. Villagers who had come to witness the ritual ran for cover for fear of being trampled by the frenzied men or struck by the chair they wielded. Finally, when the entire route had been covered, the god took his leave, and the men came out of their trances. Many of them bore bruises caused by their many falls under the heavy chair.

The villagers look forward to such exciting occasions and talk about them long after they are past. The exploits of the *t'iao t'ung* are a common topic of discussion among the villagers, and some consider them capable of performing superhuman acts while possessed. The magnificent feats of the *t'iao t'ung* in the old days are commonly recounted, and people admit that there are only a few *t'iao t'ung* in the area who now possess really unusual powers.

Of the magical rituals and shamanistic feats discussed by villagers, one of the most unusual is a feat performed by a *t'iao t'ung* while in a trance walking barefoot on hot coals without being harmed. The villagers note that few *t'iao t'ung* attempt this anymore. Some villagers claim that the *t'iao t'ung* used to walk on water. A young man related a story to me and several villagers about a *t'iao t'ung* who, while in a trance, had tried this several years earlier. Everyone present dissolved into fits of hysterical laughter at the last line of the tale—"When the *t'iao t'ung* tried to walk on the water he went under and was drowned."

However, there are certain classic feats which are performed successfully by the *t'iao t'ung* today. One of the most common is for a possessed *t'iao t'ung* to "cut his head open with a sword" without seriously harming himself. Commonly, this is done at a ceremonial called "taking water," which is performed only once in several years by any particular village, though within the immediate area each year there is usually one village which holds it. A *t'iao t'ung*, while possessed by a god, informs the villagers that they must schedule this ceremony for a specific date at a certain river. On the appointed day, most of the male villagers accompany the *t'iao t'ung* to the river, which may be several miles away. At the river, the *t'iao t'ung* goes into a trance and blindly staggers into the water. All the villagers run into the water after him. He is handed a sword with which he cuts his forehead, and the other men push his head to the surface of the water, allowing his blood to mix with the river water. Since the *t'iao t'ung* is possessed by the god his blood is sacred, and when it mixes with the water, the water is considered holy. At the moment of consecration, the villagers frantically fill the kettles, bottles, and barrels which they have brought with them. The water is carried home and used for its

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a member of one's family to suffer and possibly even die without trying every available means to save him?"

As is true of the curing rituals, the ritual that usually follows a fire in the village also has the important function of alleviating anxiety over this constant threat about which the villagers can do little directly. And, similarly, for another ever-present concern, the taking water ritual serves as a form of health insurance. Thus, these rituals also do much to relieve the constant anxieties of the villagers.

The psychological value of the curing rituals to the patient is very obvious. In Western society, when doctors and medicines cannot cure an illness, there is usually little room for further hope except for the minority who believe in practitioners like Oral Roberts or some other faith healer or miracle worker. In rural Taiwan, however, no one need abandon hope at this point, nor feel totally helpless in the face of the unknown. It is always possible and culturally acceptable to attribute the trouble to some supernatural cause and call in a shaman.

There is a possiblity of real psychological benefit for the patient who can be made to believe that the supernatural is truly the cause of his illness and that it is being dealt with by time-tested, traditional means. If he is, in fact, suffering from some psychosomatic illness, the reassurance that everything possible is being done can have very definite value. The shamanistic curing ritual, of course, also focuses attention on the patient. Family, friends, and villagers join together in the hope that their participation will bring about a successful cure. The attention, and the knowledge that the family has willingly assumed a heavy financial burden to have these services performed, can well give the patient a real feeling of worth and contribute to his recovery.

This kind of reaction can be seen in the case of the village girl, discussed above, who "went mad" (*fa feng le*). From the villagers' point of view the powers of the shamans, combined with the help elicited from the gods, together rid the girl of the demons that possessed her. Yet, from the Western point of view, it seems reasonable to assume that the rituals may have brought about their purpose in quite a different way—by making her a center of the attention not only of her family but the entire village, they made her conscious that the entire community valued her and hoped for her recovery. Their solicitude could therefore have relieved some of her anxieties and given her the confidence she needed to get well.

Another contributing factor is related to the very nature of the ritual which is used to exorcise demons. The vehemence of the shaman as he attempts to exorcise a demon is impressive enough to hear, but to be the object of his vehemence must be traumatic indeed. The shaman performs alone in the dimly lit house with the patient, while the family and villagers listen nervously from outside, not daring to come near for fear they will be "hit head-on by the demon" as he flees the

121 faction (discussed later in this Chapter) for several
665 years although, as previously stated, the li leadership
571 changed from "traditional" to "progressive" and back. The internal differences are relatively swallowed so as to present a united front at each succeeding level.

Local Officers and Procedures

632 The mayor is responsible for organizing corvee labor for civic improvement. He is also extremely influential in li-wide social and religious affairs for, although each of these has its own independent organizing committee, he is often an ex officio member and is usually an important advisor. It is helpful if the mayor has good relations in town so that political figures will be sympathetic to the community. For example, when an assessor [731] is sent from town to lower taxes in the event of a natural disaster, it is considered best if he already has positive feelings towards the village and a friendly attitude towards village leaders.

As can be seen from the above requirements, the mayor must be a persuasive man to be truly effective. Basic qualifications for office include literacy and flu- [212] ency in Mandarin. Although there are no wealth require- [191] ments for office and Talei Li has never had more than one [554] resident whose primary income was derived from rent, no poor man such as a farm laborer has ever held a high